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Garlic Gulch: John Steinbeck in Los Gatos, 1936-1938

JAMES P. DELGADO

In 1936, young author John Steinbeck and his wife of five years, Carol, were living in a small cottage owned by John's father in Pacific Grove, California. Not being regularly employed, Steinbeck supported himself with twenty-five dollars a month his father gave him, and whatever infrequent money he could pick up by writing or catching fish to sell. Steinbeck's perseverance in writing finally paid off with two best-selling novels, *Tortilla Flat* and *In Dubious Battle*. Now money was readily available for the first time in his life, but it was to have its drawbacks with the attendant notoriety. John and Carol were constantly plagued by curiosity seekers and countless interview hunting journalists. With money in pocket, then, and a need for greater privacy and quiet, the Steinbecks began a search for a new home.¹

Their search took them to the foothills above the small village of Los Gatos, which lay some fifty miles south of San Francisco, nestled against the Santa Cruz Mountain range. There, in a grove of oaks, manzanita, and madrone, the Steinbecks found the perfect site for their new home. Perhaps the lingering romance of Spanish-Mexican days and the unchanged character of the land appealed to John Steinbeck and his love of California. The site was much the same as it had been centuries before,

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when men had first trodden over its soil and through the quiet grove. When exploring Spanish padres and questing Spanish soldiers discovered this grove, they had paused to note at its beauty and to name it "Rinconada de Los Gatos," or the place of the wildcats. Later, under Mexican rule, these lands had been granted by the governmental authorities to Juan Jose Hernandez and Sebastian Peralta, citizens of the nearby Pueblo de San Jose de Guadalupe.² Known as the Rancho Rinconada de Los Gatos, the land grant encompassed some 6,631.44 acres of rolling hills and flat land. The grantees left much of the land untenanted, choosing to build their small adobe homes in the valley. The only visitors to the hilly grove were long-horned Spanish cattle.

Governments changed with the coming of the Yankees in search of gold in 1849. These hardy and rugged pioneers, when they tired of trying to wrest the precious yellow metal from the earth, turned to tilling and cultivating the same soil. By purchase of homestead, and sometimes by deceit and theft, they slowly took possession of the old ranchos, building farms, fences, ranches, and towns. The Rinconada de Los Gatos was purchased and built upon in this fashion; and the tiny village of Los Gatos grew up, surrounded by the farms and homes of countless American settlers. One of those settlers was the Bowdish family, who owned a ranch near the Los Gatos settlement. The grove of oak and manzanita that John Steinbeck would one day own lay within the Bowdish lands, still untouched and awaiting the hand of man.

In 1936, Eleanor Bowdish offered part of the family ranch for sale. A 10.38-acre parcel was surveyed by McMillan and McMillan of San Jose, who tentatively subdivided the land into two-acre plots. The plots were listed for sale through realtor Effie V. Walton of Los Gatos, at that time the leading realtor in the area.³ When the Steinbecks came searching for a home, they visited Effie Walton, who took them to see the Bowdish property. Perhaps Effie sensed the deep love and conviction John felt for California and its natural beauty. Or perhaps the Steinbecks were very vocal about their need for privacy and quiet. Effie assumed the Steinbecks would like the Bowdish property. She assumed right, as John and Carol fell in love with the place. On May 11, 1936, John purchased a 1.639-acre

plot of the Bowdish property and immediately began to make plans for the construction of the new home.

The imminent arrival of the Steinbecks to the community did not escape notice in the Los Gatos press. On May 14, 1936, the *Los Gatos Mail-News* announced: "Noted Author to Join Colony Here of Literary Folk." It went on to state that "Steinbeck, who entered the ranks of the best sellers with his *Tortilla Flat* and *In Dubious Battle*, will join the Los Gatos literary colony and that under the supervision of Miss Oneda Stapp, an interesting California farm house type of dwelling will be erected for the Steinbecks, who are expected to make their permanent residence here as soon as the house is completed."⁴

Access to the building site was no problem as A. E. Walton had laid an oil-surfaced gravel road into the grove. Little more than a winding path through the ravines and brush of the grove, the small drive was to become the future Greenwood Lane. With the road providing easy access, John began to build the home in the summer of 1936. A small, one-story wooden structure, the finished building was to be the first home owned by John. Small and simple, the white board and batten home encompassed all of 1452 square feet.⁵ Rather than being a typical California farm house dwelling like his neighbors', John's home possessed the charm of old Carmel. The interior was panelled with hand-rubbed white pine which glowed in the firelight and early morning sun. A copper-hooded fireplace captured the light in the room, sending it gleaming and sparkling across the floor. A small oil-burning floor furnace heated the home. Delighted with the effect, John wrote to his friend Louis Paul: "I'm delighted that your coming out. You'll see the new house then. It is just being built now. It's a very beautiful place."⁶

To insure his privacy, Steinbeck built an eight-foot high grapestake fence around the property. Though they only had one neighbor, who lived nearly a mile away, John felt the need for privacy and seclusion. His feelings were displayed in a letter in which he delightedly said "we live two miles out of town (Los Gatos) on a hill, and a few people come here. They have to want to see us if they come because of the distance. There are no casuals."⁷ But unfortunately for John, the small town of

Los Gatos was growing and more people began moving into the immediate area. As the area around John and Carol's house began to be built up, a fiercely private Steinbeck ordered his neighbors not to divulge his address. This worked rather well, with many visitors who drove through the area inquiring as to the residence of the author Steinbeck being met with a noncommittal shrug of the shoulders.

Even with the threat of his solitude being interrupted, Steinbeck relished the country atmosphere of his home and would not consider leaving the area. Styling himself a type of country squire, John named the home "Steinbeckia," which he had carved into the gate. Later, when plagued by seemingly endless uninvited guests, John changed the name of the home to the seemingly poetic "Arroyo del Ajo," which when translated means "Garlic Gulch." In Garlic Gulch, John wrote and worked on his latest writings, be they articles, short stories, or books. All work was done inside a small room he had set aside for his work. John described the room as "a little tiny room to work in. Just big enough for a bed and desk and a gun rack and a little book rack. I like to sleep in the room I work in."⁸

By 1937, the Steinbecks were firmly settled in their home, but there was a definite lack of space, which they corrected by adding on to the home. The addition was in the form of a guest cottage, as John and Carol were constantly being visited by friends and business acquaintances. John's novel *Of Mice and Men* was being filmed in Hollywood, and John and Carol were being visited frequently by friends they had made in Hollywood, including actors Burgess Meredith and Charlie Chaplin. A guest cottage was an absolute must for the Steinbecks. John wrote to his friend George Albee that "at present we are building on a guest room. We had none and really needed one. It will have big glass doors and screens so that it will really be an outside porch when we want to open the doors."⁹ The *Los Gatos Mail-News* noted the improvements with the notice that the home "has been considerably enlarged."¹⁰ John also made improvements in the main house and added red brick walks between the house and the guest house.

John and Carol Steinbeck had come to Garlic Gulch seeking peace and privacy. However, as John's stature as a writer increased, the Steinbecks

found themselves constantly being bothered by the public they had fled in Pacific Grove. John was always chasing strangers out of the yard, and when he went so far as to lock the gate, some unwanted "guest" went so far as to break the lock. To add to their general discomfort, curious neighbors nearly drove John to distraction. He was attempting to write a major novel, a novel much larger and more challenging than he had ever attempted before. That novel was his famous *The Grapes of Wrath*.

John liked to write without interruption and without guests, and he particularly hated to have people watch him as he worked. Once, while working on the porch, he looked up from his writing to see a curious female neighbor across the ravine peering anxiously from her porch at him. Taking great pains to make sure she was watching, John strode to the edge of the porch and made a great show of urinating. When he looked up, the neighbor was gone, presumably never to spy again.¹¹

Finally the countless invasions of privacy proved too much for John, and as much as he loved Garlic Gulch, he realized the time had come to move on. John complained that "this place is getting built up and we have to move. Houses all around us now and so we will get farther back in the country. But next time we'll be in the middle of fifty acres, not two. I can hear the neighbors' stomachs rumbling."¹² The fifty acres John was referring to was a ranch in the Santa Cruz mountains Carol's father had been negotiating for. John listed the home in Garlic Gulch for sale with Effie Walton, who advertised the availability of the home to some prospective buyers. Luckily, the first person to see the home bought it, freeing John to finish work on *The Grapes of Wrath*. The *Los Gatos Mail-News* reported that:

John Steinbeck's home on Greenwood Road has been sold to Miss Barbara Burke of the Burke Finishing School in San Francisco, it was announced this week by Effie Walton, realtor through whose office the sale was made. Steinbeck has purchased the old Biddle home on the road to Montezuma School. The noted author is seeking greater seclusion.¹³

Since Miss Burke wished to move in immediately, John and Carol left the Garlic Gulch home in December of 1938, and there, at the Biddle ranch, John completed his work on *The Grapes of Wrath*.

The Steinbeck home still stands in the grove of oaks, madrone, and manzanita. The old sign of "Arroyo del Ajo" remains on the gate, reminding one of John's sense of humor. However, the home has changed since John and Carol's residency there. Remodeled in 1966, the home now encompasses some 3500 square feet with six bedrooms and four baths. The home is still being used as a private residence, and the home is said to retain "the style and charm of the old home down to the last detail."¹⁴ Still shaded by the same oaks and brush that Steinbeck loved, the home and grounds now have an atmosphere of quiet, secluded peace. The spirit of John Steinbeck and his California is still very much alive and will hopefully continue for years to come.



NOTES

1. Nelson Valjean. *John Steinbeck: The Errant Knight*. (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1975), page 158.
2. Clyde Arbuckle and F. Ralph Rambo. *Santa Clara County Ranchos*. (San Jose, the Rosicrucian Press, 1970), page 29.
3. Bruce Curtis, former owner of the Steinbeck home. Personal interview in his office, March 2, 1978.
4. *Los Gatos Mail-News*, May 14, 1936.
5. Gale McNebb, County Building Inspector's Office. Personal interview, February 27, 1978.
6. Elaine Steinbeck and Robert Wallsten, editors. *Steinbeck: A Life In Letters*. (New York: The Viking Press, 1970), page 130.
7. *Life In Letters*, page 131.
8. *Life In Letters*, page 132.
9. *Life In Letters*, page 132.
10. *Los Gatos Mail-News*, December 30, 1937.
11. Valjean, page 158.
12. *Life In Letters*, page 169.
13. *Los Gatos Mail-News*, September 16, 1938.
14. *Saratoga Times*, October 16, 1975.

Robert Louis Stevenson & the Goats: Monterey County Ranch Discovered

ROGER G. SWEARINGEN

Everyone knows that Robert Louis Stevenson went out camping not long after he came to Monterey in September 1879, that he got lost and fell sick, and that he was nursed back to life by two goat ranchers in the Carmel Valley. "Two nights I lay out under a tree, in a sort of stupor," Stevenson wrote of the incident after he returned to Monterey in October, doing nothing but fetch water for myself & horse, light a fire and make coffee, and all night awake hearing the goat bells ringing and the tree frogs singing when each new noise was enough to set me mad. Then the bear hunter came round, pronounced me "real sick" and ordered me up to the ranche.

It was an odd, miserable piece of my life; and according to all rule, it should have been my death; but after awhile my spirit got up again in a divine frenzy and has since kicked and spurred my vile body forward with great emphasis and success.

But surprisingly, in the more than a hundred years since then no one has tried to discover the exact location of this celebrated goat ranch. It is a pleasure to report here, for the first time anywhere, that this has now been done.

Stevenson's biographers, from Graham Balfour to Jenni Calder, are silent on the point. All refer with various degrees of vagueness to a goat ranch in the mountains. Anne Benson Fisher, in *No More a Stranger* (1946), includes a photograph of one of the ranchers, Anson Smith, sitting in front of the cabin (p. 232), and she indicates that the ranch was

ROGER G. SWEARINGEN is a noted expert on Robert Louis Stevenson, and has written *The Prose Writings of Robert Louis Stevenson: A Guide*. He has taught at Yale, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and UC Davis.

"on the San Clemente" (p. 74). But this seems to be the extent of her knowledge, except that Mrs. Hattie Sargent Gragg's father "bought the goat ranch and added it to his holdings" and that in 1946 it was "now a ruin except for the fireplace" (p. 233). Stevenson himself describes the ranchers vividly, although he identifies only Smith by name:

Here is another curious start in my life. I am living at an angora goat ranche in the Coast Line Mountains, 18 miles from Monterey. I was camping out, but got so sick that the two Rancheros took me in and tended me. One is an old bear hunter, 72 years old and a captain from the Mexican war; the other a pilgrim and one who was out with the bear flag and under Fremont when California was taken by the states. They are both true frontiersmen, and most kind and pleasant. Cap' Smith, the bear hunter, is my physician and I obey him like an oracle.

The Walton and Curtis *Handbook to Monterey and Vicinity* (1875) refers, not very helpfully as to location, to "the bee and fruit ranch of Messrs. Smith and Wright" in the Carmel Valley (p. 30). The only other information of value appears in an interview with one of the ranch children, Sarah Wright, then Mrs. E. J. Bolce, published in the *Monterey Peninsula Herald* in 1950 on the occasion of the dedication of Stevenson House at Monterey. Mayo Hayes O'Donnell was the interviewer, and he also talked to another of the ranch children, Sarah Wright's stepsister Millie Claudie, then Mrs. Birks. "It was Mrs. Bolce and her sister," writes O'Donnell, "who were then Sarah and Dolly Wright, living with their parents Mr. and Mrs. Jonathan Wright on a goat ranch at White Rock, who found Robert Louis Stevenson a very ill man, on their father's property. They had gone for a walk on the mountain trail and came upon Stevenson lying beneath a tree, too weak to walk or to talk, the horse he had borrowed from Edward Berwick beside him. . . . Mrs. Birks remembers that Mr. Stevenson was so thin that the children called him 'Splinters,' but he was never too ill to be kind to the little girls." This account differs from Stevenson's own in saying that the children, not the ranchers, found him, but it adds the helpful note that the ranch was "at White Rock."

Many years ago a friend and I spent a very pleasant but profitless afternoon driving around the Carmel Valley looking for the ranch, and at

that time we succeeded in convincing ourselves that it was indeed located somewhere in the White Rock region of the Carmel Valley. This proves to be the case, but it was not until (of all dates) April Fool's Day 1981 that I had a chance to pursue the question in county land records for Monterey County in Salinas. Here, with the able assistance of Vicki Myrick of the County Recorder's Office, I found the documents needed to resolve the question once and for all. The first is dated April 1877 and was recorded on June 28th of that year. In it, Jonathan Wright conveys to Anson Smith, "for and in consideration of the sum of two dollars, lawful money of the United States of America, to him in hand paid" an undivided half interest in 178 acres, duly specified, and equipment, "rents, issues and profits thereof." The ranchers had become partners.

The crucial document is the second. Made nine years later, on March 15th 1886, and recorded on March 20th, this document by Anson Smith conveys his undivided half interest in the same property to Bradley V. Sargent. Not only this, Smith also conveys "all my undivided one half interest in 1000 goats (more or less), three head of cattle, one wagon, farming implements and household furniture, said personal property being held in Company with Jonathan Wright and being on said real property." A thousand goats: this leaves no doubt that the land in question was indeed the ranch where Robert Louis Stevenson was nursed back to health in September 1879.

The exact legal description of the property is the same in both documents. It is 178 acres in Township 17 south of Range 2, East Mount Diablo Meridian, comprising the following: Lot 2 in Section 19, Lots 1 and 2 and the northeast quarter of the southeast quarter in Section 30, and Lot 6 in Section 29. Lot designations have changed slightly since then, but the description translates into a 178-acre parcel running approximately 1½ miles along the southwest boundary of the San Francisquito Rancho. The parcel is just north of the White Rock Gun Club and just south of the San Carlos Ranch, including neither of them, and is reached by continuing along Robinson Canyon Road past the San Carlos Ranch toward the White Rock Gun Club. San Clemente Creek, as one would expect, flows through the property. An on-the-spot investigation is pending.

Printing in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco: A Flame Before the Fire

BRUCE L. JOHNSON

The history of printing in nineteenth-century San Francisco has been a subject of interest since the city was founded. Edward Kemble's *History of Newspapers in California* (1858) was the first full-scale attempt to document that history. The complete story, however, which must consider not only commercial printing, fine bookmaking, publishing, and the important role of women, but also many ancillary activities (such as book-selling, papermaking, typefounding, and the role of labor organizations) has never been written. Perhaps the closest anyone has ever come to producing a full history of the subject was Charles A. Murdock, who wrote "A History of Printing in San Francisco," a series of articles published in 1924-25 in *The Pacific Printer & Publisher*.

My comments here are not intended as a complete history, but rather a beginning framework for such a study, and my thoughts are based on three projects with which I have been involved for several years: a study of James Weld Towne, printer, publisher, and paper merchant in San Francisco from 1853 until 1868; a directory of printers, publishers, and companies and individuals engaged in related activities in San Francisco between 1850 and 1906; and research for a new edition of Murdock's important series of articles cited above. A republication of Murdock's history seems a logical point of departure for a more complete study of the subject.

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San Francisco in 1850 was a city of action that had grown up overnight. It was a city that telescoped half a century's growth into a year, and within five years was a financial rival of New York and, in some respects, a cultural rival of Boston. The growth of the city during the early fifties was reflected in the vast number of ships that arrived in the harbor to disgorge both passengers and supplies. The fact that the city's per capita wealth, though far from being evenly distributed, was suddenly the highest in the nation, meant that there were many people who could well afford the good things in life, both material and cultural.

The demand for the printed word locally produced was at first met by newspapers and magazines; within the first ten years after the discovery of gold, 132 periodicals had been started in San Francisco. Poetry, short stories, and other literary pieces often appeared in the early newspapers. The newspaper printing offices, such as the Evening News Printing Office on Sansome Street, also did whatever job printing was required.

The difficulties faced by early printers were considerable. The city was besieged by fires; there were five serious ones within only five months in 1851. Skilled workmen were scarce and apt to run off to the mines at the first rumor of a new find. Supplies of paper, ink, and type were subject to the delays – often eight to ten months – and expenses of the Cape Horn and Isthmus routes. But the public was willing to pay well and the profits to be made were large; printers were paid \$16 a day to compete with the prevailing wages in the gold fields – six times the scale paid to New York compositors of the period.

Printers conducted business on a lavish scale, purchasing all the latest novelties in type design offered by the Eastern foundries. And they considered their work to be better than that of the East – it *was*, in fact, good technically, even the job printing, which often seemed to display in capsule format most of the fonts a printer had available in his shop.

What little publishing was done was carried on by printers and booksellers, such as Marvin & Hitchcock of the Pioneer Book Store, and usually comprised city directories, guides to the mines, maps, and an occasional poem or story about pioneer life in the Golden State. The first true publisher, and one of the most outstanding, is generally considered

to have been Anton Roman, who came to California in 1851. After spending several years prospecting and selling books in the mining regions,



A. ROMAN & CO.,
Book Establishment,
417 & 419
MONTGOMERY STREET,
SAN FRANCISCO.

Roman established himself permanently in San Francisco as a bookman in 1859; he began publishing in 1860. His store was at 419 Montgomery Street, and although he styled himself a publisher, bookseller, and importer, the most important of these activities was the last – the highest percentage of books Roman offered for sale in his shop carried Eastern imprints.

Many of the books Roman published locally show his deep and continued interest in the literature and history of California. His 1863 edition of John S. Hittell's *Resources of California* is credited with having awakened the Eastern states to the industrial potential of the West. The third edition of this same work, published in 1867, is an extremely interesting piece of bookmaking. As its opening "Affidavit" affirms, it is wholly the product of California, from the materials with which it was made, to the workmanship. It was printed by the Alta California Printing House, bound by Edward Bosqui, and printed on paper made at the Bay Area's first paper mill, the Pioneer Paper Mill in Marin County. Even the thread for the binding and the pasteboard for the covers were of local manufacture.

Roman is best remembered for his encouragement of local literary talent. He was a close friend of Charles Warren Stoddard, whose *Poems* he published in 1867. But more famous is his association with Francis Bret Harte. In 1866 Roman published *Outcroppings*, a selection of California verse edited by Harte, which drew a great deal of criticism, and consequently, attention to Harte. The faults found by the critics were summarized by Franklin Walker:

The he-men among Pacific Coast poets were outraged to find that the meager collection was made up chiefly of poems by city-bred Bohemians, slight

effeminate fellows who had never toted a gun, newcomers who had not yet got used to the atmosphere. This weak-winged writing covey included such triflers as "Inigo" Webb, a New York importation who had lost all his money playing mining stocks and was about to take his sore head back where he came from, young "Pip Pepperpod" Stoddard, who was so much like a girl that he blushed when the fellows told dirty stories in his company, and dark-haired, wild-eyed "Comet Quirls" Kendall, who divided his time between writing passionate and somewhat indecent poetry to the girls and mooning by the hour in the Cobweb Saloon down by Meigg's wharf. Here was a good subject for a real fight, one that they could all enjoy.

Although this attention was not especially favorable – as Harte remarked to Roman, he was "abused beyond [his] most sanguine expectation" – it would soon turn to an appreciation of Harte's literary talent with the publication of "The Lost Galleon" the following year in a collection of poems carrying the same title. *The Lost Galleon*, with illustrations drawn by William Keith and cut by Durban Van Vleck, was read by San Franciscans with "a sense of having discovered a real poet." The book was handsomely produced by Towne & Bacon at the Excelsior Printing Office – one of the last and perhaps the best example of printing produced by James Towne.

The first eight years of Roman's publishing program led to his greatest venture, the creation of *The Overland Monthly* in 1868. Roman induced Bret Harte to become editor and a frequent contributor. Harte's most famous short stories, including "Luck of Roaring Camp" and "The Outcasts of Poker Flat," first appeared in the *Overland*. "Luck" was soon published in several foreign editions, and Harte's reputation spread rapidly as a result. *The Overland Monthly* also brought to the public stories and poetry by other notable California authors, like Mark Twain, Ina Coolbrith, and Joaquin Miller. Roman was forced by ill health to sell the publication in 1870 to John Carmany, who maintained its standard of excellence until its end in December 1875. *The Overland Monthly* was later brought out in a Second Series.

Though Roman continued to publish as late as the 1880s, he is most often identified with the late 1860s, the period in which California literary production really began. Of the fifty-four books he published, many at-

tracted attention and sales in the East. This fact must have been due in part to the attractive appearance of much of the printing done for Roman, executed by some of San Francisco's leading firms of the '60s, including Towne & Bacon, Bacon & Company (after April 1868), Joseph Winterburn, and the ever-popular Edward Bosqui.

Bosqui entered the bookmaking field after a short career in banking, real estate, and customs work. He bought a half interest in the book-binding firm of Alexander Buswell. In November 1863 he established his own bindery as Edward Bosqui & Company. The exact date that Bosqui began his printing business is uncertain; it was not before February 1864, however. A letter from James Towne to a potential customer states that "you may not be aware that we [that is, Towne & Bacon] do a very large amount of Printing for E. Bosqui & Co. who are only Book Binders, and not Printers. If they can do better by you than we, it will be very strange to say the least." Thus, even though the 1864 edition of *Custom House Regulations* has always been listed as the first example of printing done by Edward Bosqui, the book was actually produced by James Towne at the Excelsior Printing Office – 1,000 copies were completed on 27 February 1864 for \$230.00.



Mr. Johnson's survey of early San Francisco printing will be concluded in the next issue of the Quarterly News-Letter.

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Elected to Membership

The two classifications of membership above Regular Membership are Patron Memberships, \$125 a year, and Sustaining Memberships, \$50 a year.

NEW SUSTAINING MEMBERS	ADDRESS	SPONSOR
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Dwight Pilz	Berkeley	Membership Committee

The following members have transferred from Regular to Sustaining Membership:

The Rev. Blaine	Sun City West,
J. Gutmacher	Arizona
Jeffrey Furlough Thomas	San Francisco

The following have been elected to membership since the publication of the Spring *News-Letter*:

NEW MEMBERS	ADDRESS	SPONSOR
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Gifts & Acquisitions

Bookseller-member James Lorson of Fullerton has given the Club three miniature books. The first two are copies of *Dibdin's Ghost*, one in wrappers and the other in a special board binding. These were printed for Mr. Lorson as a Christmas keepsake and charmingly printed by Vance Gerry in Los Angeles in an edition of 500 copies. The other little book is a very ambitious sixty-page fascinating story on *T. E. Lawrence and Fine Printing* by Philip M. O'Brien, printed at the Hillside Press, Buffalo, New York, in 1980. They are well turned-out little books, nicely cased and boxed, and we are pleased to have them. Due to their small size they may be seen at the Club Library by special arrangement only.

Through an unhappy oversight this reviewer forgot to acknowledge with thanks two books given to the Club some time ago. In memory of her husband, Mrs. Ralph D. Cornell presented us with two editions of his noteworthy book *Conspicuous California Plants*. One is the first edition of this work, printed by the San Pasqual Press in 1938, and the other is the Plantin Press edition of 1978. These two fine editions are now part of our collection of California printing. Our apologies to Mrs. Cornell for the oversight and our thanks for her gifts.

From Leicester, England, we have received two new batches of wonderful examples of our most consistent and generous giver, Toni Savage, whose Phoenix broadsheets now go up to number 200. In addition to these new broadsheets he sent us an eight-page pamphlet printed to celebrate Phoenix Broadside 200. Only 80 copies of the pamphlet were printed and ours is number 28. And with all that he sent eleven other eight-page booklets ranging in editions from 50 to 125 copies. These are for the most part poems by various hands all embellished with charming drawings. Four of them are illustrated by Rigby Graham, three by Kathie Layfield, one by the author Michael Smith, and one illustrated by Toni Savage himself. They are all charmingly produced and all are exciting additions to our very large collection of this uncommon private printer. The collection must be seen to be appreciated – as indeed it can be at the Club rooms.

From our second most regular giver, Member George Cabaniss, we have received a fine copy of *Stockton Boyhood* which is a reminiscence of Carl Ewald

Grunsky printed for the Friends of The Bancroft Library by Lawton Kennedy in 1959. This pristine copy will find its place in our growing collection of California fine printing.

From Robert Hawley, proprietor of Oyez publications, we have received a copy of *From the Grande Chartreuse*, a poem for Gary Snyder by Thomas Parkinson. The poem was printed for Robert E. Blesse as a New Year's Greeting for the friends of Oyez in an edition of 250 copies.

Member Paulette Greene in New York has sent a copy of *Sherlock Holmes: Rare-Book Collector* by Madeleine B. Stern, together with a short-title catalogue of The Sherlock Holmes Library which Mrs. Greene published in an edition of 500 copies.

Don Gray of the Twowindows Press in Berkeley sent the Club a copy of *Facing Mirrors* by Robert Fossum and Sy Kahn, the most recent Twowindows publication. It was printed in an edition of 500 copies with a cover illustration by Dana Smith from an original etching. It is a clean, well-printed booklet of eighty pages. We are happy to include this work by the Twowindows Press in our collection of California printing.

Msgr. Francis J. Weber has sent us another of his wonderful series of miniature books, this one produced on the occasion of the Bicentennial of Los Angeles. It is entitled *Los Angeles: a Bicentennial* and was printed for him in an edition of 500 copies by the Junipero Serra Press in San Buenaventura this year. This is typical of the handsome small books that Father Weber has been responsible for and it is a delight to own. Our thanks to him and to his designer Francis Braun.

Sierra Club Books has given us a copy of their publication *Thoreau Country*. It contains incredible photographs by Herbert W. Gleason and text selections from the works of Thoreau edited by Mark Silber with an introduction by Paul Brooks. This is a well-designed and extraordinarily illustrated table book. It is also a fine example of photographic reproduction and as such will find a welcome place in our collection of fine printing. Many thanks to the Sierra Club.

From Member Donald D. Ackland, publisher of Rosebud Books, we have received copies of two of his recent publications, *Los Angeles: an Illustrated History* and *The Enchanted Hill*. Our thanks to Mr. Ackland for these two examples of California printing.

The Club Library has acquired another extremely important book on lithography, a "cradle book" virtually, by the first great English lithographer-teacher, C. J. Hullmandel. The book is *The Art of Drawing on Stone* published by Hullmandel & Ackermann in London in 1824. Michael Twyman, the current authority on early lithography, calls the book, "... the most important English treatise on lithography to be published in the first half of the nineteenth century."

Hullmandel was the first English artist to attain any degree of note as a lithographer. His patented "Lithotint" was the forerunner of chromolithography. Our copy is bound in contemporary marbled boards with leather spine. Except for a few marginal stains and a repaired title-page it is in near-fine condition. These small defects take little away from a rarity of this importance.

The Club Library has also acquired a copy of an excellent book on *The American Hand Press—its Origin, Development and Use* by Herschel C. Logan with a foreword by Ward Ritchie. The author illustrated the entire book himself with some amazingly detailed drawings of twenty-one different presses. He traces the history and development of the American press from the first Adam Ramage press of 1795 to the "Baby Reliance" fabricated in 1907. For endsheets he has contributed a unique map showing the date of the first known printing in each of the fifty states. It was printed by The Castle Press for The Curt Zoller Press of Whittier in 1980. There are 300 copies of which ours is number 160.

ALBERT SPERISEN

Private Press Books, 1977, just received, is a valuable annual checklist of books and pamphlets produced by primarily non-commercial printers throughout the world. This nineteenth edition includes approximately 150 private presses from the U.S.A., western Europe, Australia, New Zealand, etc. Year by year one is impressed by the increasing number of men and women who have adopted the "Black Art" as a means of expressing their craftsmanship, art, and writing. Almost fifty percent use a handpress. There are ten California private presses listed. The checklist includes name and address, book titles, and production details. U.S.A. private press persons, who have not been included in the past, should write to Dwight Agner, 320 Snapfinger Drive, Athens, GA 30605.

Copies may be ordered from Private Libraries Association, Ravelston, South View Road, Pinner, Middlesex, England for \$15.00.

LEWIS ALLEN

Member S. Gale Herrick has given the Club a copy of Carl J. Weber's *Fore-Edge Painting*, a historical survey of a curious art in book decoration, published by Harvey House, Irvington-on-Hudson, New York in 1966, a reprint of the 1949 first edition which has long been out of print. The book is the most important single contribution on the subject and the Club thanks Mr. Herrick for this welcome addition to our reference collection. The late Mr. Weber was the well-known Curator of Rare Books and Manuscripts at Colby College and is the father of Mr. David C. Weber, Head of The Stanford Libraries.

The Club has received from the publisher, Nicholas T. Smith, a copy of the 1981 edition of the *Directory of American Book Workers*, a comprehensive listing of hand workers in the book arts within the United States and Canada compiled by Renee Roff. Some 1,248 hand workers are listed alphabetically with a letter code at the end of each entry to identify the person's specialty and a number code indicating membership in various organizations. There is also a geographic directory and an index as well as a breakdown of all the persons listed by specialty. The book is available from the publisher at P.O. Box 66, Bronxville, NY 10708, for \$19.95.

The Club has received from the publisher, Scarab Press, a copy of Clifford Burke's *Printing Poetry*, with a foreword by William Everson. In the decade from 1966 to 1976 Clifford Burke printed an impressive body of modern poetry in book, pamphlet, and broadside format at his Cranium Press, all of it vigorous, clean, and well-produced. He followed and amplified the tradition of the Auerhahn Press of an intense relationship between poet and printer. He has distilled his experiences wrestling with text and typography in this thoughtful and attractive volume. Mr. Burke discusses the tools, printing types, the practice of typography, the practice of printing, the poem on the page, illustrations, paper and ink, and bookbinding. There is a chapter entitled "Of Money, Time and Rust" and there is an appendix to the "Poem on the Page" chapter in which he has set several poems in a variety of ways to illustrate some of the problems of setting poetry in type. There is an index, a bibliography, and a useful listing of sources for tools, materials, and supplies.

This is a major statement from an important modern printer and will doubtless take its place in the front ranks of the literature of printing. It was printed in an edition of 2,000 copies, which are available at \$50 from the Scarab Press, 300 Broadway, San Francisco, CA 94133.

The Plain Wrapper Press of Verona, Italy, has given the Club a superb example of its printing, *Circhi & Cene (Circuses and Suppers)* by Andrea Zanzotto.

There is as well an English translation by Beverly Allen, and two etchings by the noted English artist Joe Tilson. All of this is presented in an elegant folio format bound in unbleached linen with a handsome green cloth slipcase. The edition is limited to 150 copies on dampened Italian handmade paper printed on an 1847 Washington handpress by proprietor Richard-Gabriel Rummonds and his partner Alessandro Zanella in 1979. This is a striking example of printing from one of the world's great handpresses and we are extremely grateful to the press for this generous gift.

D. STEVEN COREY

Reviews

Nevada. Stanley Paher. Las Vegas, Nevada: Nevada Publications, 1980. 588pp. \$95.

Bibliography is the stoop labor of literature. Nobody wants to do it. Yet it is the basis of most non-fiction. So we must call attention to this extraordinary bibliography of the Silver State. It is a remarkable achievement because of its great coverage and its detailed annotations, and also because it is not the work of a committee of academics but of seven long years of study by a single bibliographer. It is a *tour de force*, if somewhat flawed.

First, the warts. The volume is, unfortunately, expensive. Its index is feeble. Some titles which should be main entries are either left out or buried in annotations. Worse, the compiler – like the late Ramon Adams – gets so carried away in his annotations that objective and constructive criticism sometimes seems to be sacrificed to subjective personal feelings or bias, even naivete. This habit can be tedious, annoying, and counter-productive. The compiler can be hoist on his own petard when he criticizes a work for its “naive recommendations.”

But these objections are minor in an amazingly comprehensive directory of 2,544 works, from Frémont (1845) to 1980, which Paher has carefully examined and evaluated. The book offers the student or collector of Nevadiana a whole reference library, as it were, in one volume. Typos and factual errors are few and coverage is admirable – books, including fiction; parts of books; some documents; (published) journals of '49ers; M.A. theses, Ph.D dissertations, and oral history transcripts. Subjects include not only history and biography but also geography, economics, politics, and literature. Excluded by their format are manuscripts, annuals, ephemera, and (alas) maga-

zine articles except for major ones in the Nevada Historical Society's *Quarterly* and, occasionally, pieces in the California Historical Society *Quarterly*. It is hoped that Paher plans a second volume, a subject bibliography of Nevadiana in periodical literature. Flawless? No. Recommended? Most highly. The book is available from the publisher at P.O. Box 1544, Las Vegas, Nevada 89114.

RICHARD DILLON

Literary San Francisco. A Pictorial History from its Beginnings to the Present Day. By Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Nancy J. Peters. Illustrated. 254pp. San Francisco: City Lights Books/Harper & Row. \$15.95.

The popular poet, publisher, and bookseller, Lawrence Ferlinghetti, and his editorial associate, Nancy Peters, have compiled a fascinating mug-book of the writers associated with the Bay Area from the earliest explorers and missionaries down to the latest ranting poets on street corners, especially the intersection of Broadway and Columbus. If the geographical association is sometimes tenuous, as with the famous visitors and temporary residents who are cited, those whose literary careers were built and sustained here are not slighted. Indeed, members of the Book Club will find many familiar names and faces: authors and editors of Club books such as James D. Hart and Oscar Lewis, others connected with the fine printing community such as Porter Garnett (impersonating Pan in the buff at the Bohemian Grove) and William Everson (sewing the signatures of a book). Unusual and arresting photographs have been found by the researchers, and they seem to have chosen little-known portraits, group shots, and locales in preference to the more common views and stock pictures from the files of newspapers, magazines, and public and private archives. The text, likewise, draws upon the firsthand knowledge of the editors for recent times and good source material (including Book Club of California publications) for earlier periods. The pictorial element is balanced with a wealth of information, mostly accurate. However, this reviewer is depicted with a group of well-known writers and artists in front of City Lights Book Shop, the caption erroneously ascribing the small boy beside him as his son. In fact, the child belonged to a local comedian, and I had been invited by Mr. Ferlinghetti to a costume party and had chosen to arrive in an ambulance, trundled to the picture-taking session by white-uniformed attendants, strapped to a gurney in good health and humor. The

selection of the most contemporary authors (and—or characters) may not be sustained by a similar compilation in the year 2000, but the avowedly personal slant of this history is enchantingly bohemian.

ANDREW HOYEM

Serendipity

There will be a special program entitled "The Dickens Universe" at the UC Santa Cruz campus this summer August 2–8 presented by UC Extension, Santa Cruz and coordinated by Dr. Murray Baumgarten. This is to be the first in a series of annual workshop/conferences on Charles Dickens designed for both teachers and the general public. This first program will bring together ten distinguished Dickens scholars from throughout the University of California system. The program will combine formal lectures, small discussion groups, and films of Dickens' works. The fee for the seven days is \$75. For an information brochure you may write: University of California Extension, Santa Cruz, CA 95064.

As indicated in the masthead, Joanie Redington and Shirley Sheffield are the new Executive Directors of The Book Club of California. Gaye Kelly left her position as Executive Director at the end of March in order to move to Washington, D.C. The Board voted unanimously to make her an Honorary Member.

It is with deep regret that we note the death of Teresa (Terry) Fryworth, Executive Secretary of The Book Club of California from 1971 to 1974 who immediately preceded Gaye Kelly. Prior to coming to the Book Club Terry worked for the California Historical Society. Her many friends in both organizations will miss her greatly.

We seldom have the opportunity to comment on a bookseller's catalogue but the receipt of Catalogue Two (Spring, 1981) from Richard Q. Praeger's Transition Books is truly an outstanding event. Listed are 522 items by or about James Joyce from his first important published work up to important critical works on the man and his writing. This collection, one might assume, was the result of a single happy purchase from an important Joyce collector, but such is not the case. It was carefully assembled by Mr. Praeger over a period of years as a labor of great distinction and love. The catalogue is avail-

able from Transition Books, 445 Stockton, San Francisco, CA 94108 at \$5 a copy.

There have been several new developments in the local fine printing community. Cheryl Miller, formerly of the Five Trees Press, has recently begun printing under her own imprint. Her recently mailed announcement reads in part: "Two books are underway at Interval Press – I regard them 'first fruits' in my three-year study of books & printmaking since closing Five Trees Press. It is a pleasure to open my own press & resume work in San Francisco's fine printing community." Her first two books will be *Evolution, Big and Little* by Barbara Luck and *When We Used To Go Visit Miz Thompson* by Jane Rosenthal. The latter will be printed on Twinrocker papers and will feature woodcuts by Cheryl herself. Each of the books will be printed in editions of one hundred copies. The address of the Interval Press is 128 Downey Street, San Francisco, CA 94117.

Don Gray's Twowindows Press has recently moved to 1043 Folger Avenue in Berkeley, 94710, where Don will be devoting himself full-time to printing both commercial work and his own projects.

Mr. Richard-Gabriel Rummonds of the Plain Wrapper Press, Verona, Italy, gave an informative talk in the World Affairs Council Building on May 6 sponsored by the Book Club. Mr. Rummonds' slide lecture traced the founding and development of the press up to the present. Mr. Rummonds' partner at the press is Alessandro Zanella and together they operate one of the great hand press printing operations in the world.

D. STEVEN COREY

The Club will host the members of the ACRL Rare Books and Manuscripts Preconference at an open house on Friday, June 26, from 5 to 7 p.m. to view the Club rooms and the new exhibit of rare and unusual books from the Club's library.

Exhibition Notice

From the end of June through early August there will be an exhibition of rare and unusual books from the Club's library.

“For the Snark was a Boojum, you see.”

We are pleased to announce to members of the Book Club of California a centennial edition of Carroll's mock epic, *The Hunting of the Snark*, illustrated by Henry Holiday, newly annotated by Martin Gardner (author of *The Annotated Alice*) and further augmented and enhanced with a special essay about Holiday by Charles Mitchell and a bibliography of all the *Snark* editions by Selwyn H. Goodacre. Included in this centennial first edition will be a number of previously unpublished Holiday sketches and drawings.

This 8½ × 11 inch book, the grandest of all *Snarks*, will be available in two strictly limited 160-page letterpress editions, both produced by the famed Stinehour Press/Meridan Gravure Company:

The Subscriber's Edition, printed on Mohawk superfine eggshell and bound in ½ morocco, includes a separate portfolio of the Holiday drawings. Together, the book and drawings are inserted into a protective cloth slipcase. This edition will be offered for sale at \$395.00. Book Club of California members are invited to take advantage of this prepublication offer by sending in their orders and payments of \$350. This edition is limited to 395 numbered and signed copies, of which 350 will be offered for sale.

The Collector's Edition, will be offered for sale at \$60.00. Members of the Book Club of California, however, are invited to place prepublication orders by sending in their payment of \$45.00. This edition will be restricted to 1995 copies, of which 1950 will be offered for sale.

A Prospectus describing these editions will be sent upon receipt of your order. Books will be sent from Vermont in November, 1981. We expect the supply of this title to be exhausted before Christmas.

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